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The Commonweal

January 20, 1950

Socialism into Personalism

Michael P. Fogarty

Communities of Work

Claire Huchet Bishop

Notes on Moravia

Serge Hughes

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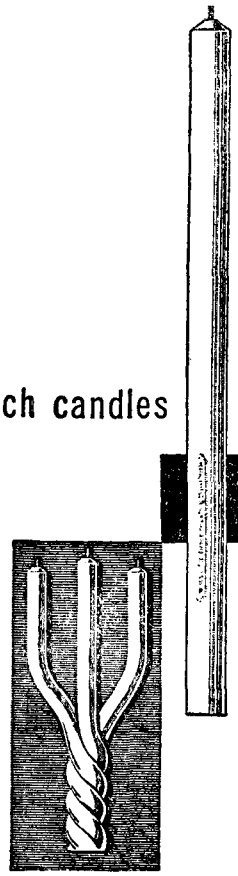

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The Commonweal

WEEK BY WEEK

Administration Economics

WHETHER it be temperament or politics, President Truman is clearly one of those who appears to know when he and his country are well off. That sentiment runs through his three big messages to Congress. As he presents the prospect, things are going well for us and, with a few expert adjustments and a little extra effort, they can go even better.

The Economic Report of January 6 stresses the fact that a mild recessionary trend has in the past few months, thanks to business and government, given way to stability in the nation. All that remains to be done is to "tap the dynamic forces of expansion" inherent in our present national economy. If markets for consumer goods continue to expand, the year-end decline in private capital investment can be turned into another upward swing.

To round out the picture is the President's forecast, a three hundred billion dollar production goal within five years and all the increase of personal income and government excise and income taxes which its realization would mean. According to this Truman view, inflation is no longer a problem or a threat; continuing increases in national production, employment and income will take care of everything. And there is no reason why the United States should not have a continuously expanding economy.

This sanguine picture is the framework for a proposed budget which contemplates a five billion dollar deficit from July 1950 to July 1951. It also fails to take into account the disparity between recent budget estimates and actual deficits. In the two preceding fiscal years, in fact, expenditures will have turned out to be four billion dollars higher than the original estimate. Yet, this 1951 budget is still presented as "reversing the trend toward higher expenditures."

What Mr. Truman is banking on is better figures in the years to come. He assumes that the big item of military appropriations will remain rather constant, that cuts in foreign aid and veterans' benefits will more than offset the increases for federal welfare benefits, housing programs and resource conservation (which itself will pay dividends over the years). He believes that even without the Brannan Plan, which he still supports to the hilt, less funds will be needed for farm commodity supports, since fewer acres will be in production. In this way he hopes that the budget will eventually be balanced and that steady reduction of the national debt will begin even though "federal responsibilities will increase as the nation grows."

Will the annual deficit ever wither away under the present political approach? It seems fatuous to count seriously on ever better times. About all that the last three decades have demonstrated about the American economy is that it works at full steam for any protracted period only when we are giving things away in great profusion, if not on a wartime scale. That would explain our continuing post-war good times, as Marshall Plan aid continues. In short, there is something decidedly unrealistic about taking comfort in the feeling that the national budget will inevitably be balanced some year in the indefinite future.

CAN anything be done about bringing the 1951 fiscal program into balance, or somewhere near it? Administration supporters claim that there is nowhere along the line that you can cut; every item as it stands is vital to our domestic and international welfare. Democratic and Republican critics, on the other hand, go all the way from advocating big slashes on certain major items to calling for a straight percentage cut right through. The budget, like our defeat in China, makes for heated politics. But Senator Douglas of Illinois, who is conscientious in his approach, suggests enough slashes in appropriations for the military establishment, for rivers and harbors, civilian employees, subsidies and housing mortgages to indicate that the President's estimate can be cut materially.

The feasibility of narrowing the gap from the other side—of raising taxes—seems less likely. Not only is it impractical politically in an election year, but there is reason to suppose that taxes on personal incomes, and on business, could not go higher without throwing American enterprise into lower gear. The unspecified tax changes to which Mr. Truman alludes will not increase

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• NEXT WEEK •

Writing about THE BATTLE OF THE HIRING HALLS along our waterfronts, Daniel Seligman introduces one of the more vocal disputants, Harry Lundeberg of the AFL, who says: "If you went into one of the shipowners' hiring halls to look for a job, you found yourself in company with characters from all over the country—hopheads, lead hounds, gas hounds—and a very few *bona fide* seamen, because *bona fide* seamen could not get a job."

Mr. Seligman explains why it will be a tragedy for American labor if waterfront hiring halls are not operated democratically.

government revenues until later fiscal years. Economies provide the only way.

Perhaps there is no point in balancing the budget in any one year. There are obviously occasions when domestic and other national emergencies come first. But the national budget should not persist in chronic unbalance. Each sizable yearly deficit makes balancing more unattainable in subsequent years. And if national tax revenues cannot keep pace with expenditures during prosperous periods, when will they ever keep up with them?

Castel Gandolfo Affair

LAST summer, commenting on the Peekskill anti-Communist riots, THE COMMONWEAL said: "It is a very sad affair, for every effort by the patriotic organizations 'to prevent the Paul Robeson concert'—along with the blows and the [Ku Klux Klan] crosses— added just so much truth to what Mr. Robeson has said in the past and will say in the future about the failures of American democracy."

That incident, and that editorial, came to mind when we read the recent reports of violence used against the young American evangelists who claimed that they had been stoned out of Castel Gandolfo and three other Italian towns.

Though the story of the persecuted evangelists made the front pages of most metropolitan papers, the facts, at this writing, are still somewhat cloudy. Even the usually precise and conscientious New York *Times* featured an A.P. release which merely reported an anonymous evangelist making a vague, sweeping charge, "The priests aroused the people against us," and another, also anonymous, who quoted a priest, likewise anonymous, as saying to an anonymous congregation, "Why don't some 300 of you young men turn their jeeps over so they will know you don't want to become Protestants?" One wonders about the priest's precision: why he specified 300 in the general call for violence. Three hundred young men in one small-town congregation in Italy—presumably there were more; 300 must have been an arbitrary limitation—surely belies the common belief that Italian men, especially Italian young men, rarely go to church. Ordinary experience with the attitude of evangelical fundamentalists toward Catholicism also makes one a little more wary than usual about accepting such generalities as "The priests aroused the people against us." It sounds a little too much like "The Jews are behind the whole thing" might sound among certain groups, or "The international bankers saw to it" might sound among others.

Prominent, too, in the first releases were those

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hardy veterans of foreign correspondence, the mysterious, nameless, faceless but very talkative "Vatican sources." This time one of these ubiquitous sources made an observation that suggests he might be at least as familiar with St. Patrick's Cathedral as he is with St. Peter's Basilica. "Much the same thing would happen if there were such preaching in a strongly Catholic Irish parish in America." Remarkable that the supposedly astute and overly diplomatic Vatican would provide spokesmen casually predicting what Americans like Bishop Oxnam and Paul Blanshard have been feverishly propagating the past few years.

But these questionable factors in the Castel Gandolfo incident may be due more to slipshod reporting than to fundamental inaccuracy. It is not hard to believe that such a thing as this incident could happen.

Wherever there are men who have a history and a belief and a way of life, there is resistance to those who come from beyond the borders with another history, another belief and another way of life. In the past that resistance has often broken out into senseless violence, especially when the outsiders came as missionaries and apostles. It happens so often in pagan lands that the missionary-in-the-soup-pot is a standard cartoon character. It happens also among civilized people. It happened at Peekskill last year when normally peaceful citizens turned on those they considered "un-American," strangers, aliens, enemies of the U. S. way of life. It happened in Charleston, Massachusetts, in 1834 when an Ursuline convent was soaked and burned by an angry mob. It happened at Ellsworth, Maine, in 1854 when Father John Bapst, S.J. was dragged from his church, tarred and feathered and paraded around the village for all to see. It happened at Saugerties, New York, in 1866 when St. Mary's church was set on fire, and, later in the same year, when Sts. Peter and Paul's church in Brooklyn was attacked. These are only a few random examples. History, American as well as any other, offers hundreds more.

These things have happened everywhere. If there were violent outbursts at Castel Gandolfo, especially violence on the black-and-white terms the Associated Press reported, it was still another shameful chapter in the history of human ignorance, human bigotry and human passion. As such it is something to be condemned. It is something for the Catholics of Italy, of America and throughout the world to be ashamed of.

The important thing is that it can and should be condemned not only in the name of liberal thought, of democratic tradition and of modern enlightenment, but in the name of Catholicism itself.

Thomas Merton, in his *Seeds of Contemplation,* finds the words for us when he writes:

> If you hate the enemies of the Church instead of loving them, you too will run the risk of becoming an enemy of the Church, and of Christ: for He said: "Love your enemies," and He also said: "He that is not with me is against me." Therefore if you do not place yourself with Christ by loving those that He loves, you are against Him.

As we spoke of the Peekskill riot, which was used to discredit American democracy abroad, so, paraphrasing somewhat, will we speak of the Castel Gandolfo affair, which will be used to discredit the Church in America: It was a very sad affair because it added just so much truth to what has been said in the past and what will be said in the future about the failures of Catholics.

Where the Twain Are Meeting

IN CEYLON this week "representatives of the empire the world still calls British," says *Newsweek* magazine, meet to face "problems on which the sun never sets."

The problems are those of Asia's economy and its people's need for food and improved health; the communism which threatens from China, nourished by the poverty of Asia; the matters of a treaty for Japan, and the rôle Britain is to assume in Europe.

The empire is not an empire, but a Commonwealth that is the first major attempt in history to confederate, on a basis of common political ideals and interests, sovereign nations which are without natural unity in race, culture, language, religion or geography. The three Asian nations which have entered the Commonwealth since the war, India, Pakistan and Ceylon, give the union a new Eastern orientation. There are 500 million people in this union, and three fifths of them are Hindu and Moslem. The remarkable decision of India and Pakistan to remain in the Commonwealth has added a considerable amount of strength to what had been a primarily Western structure. The relationship which exists between them and Britain has been the precedent for the Commonwealth established by Holland and Indonesia and is reflected rather weakly in the union the French would like to have with Viet Nam. These developments have done a great deal for the prestige and influence of the Western Democracies in the East, and this pattern for encouraging former colonial territories to become sovereign states within a larger union does a good deal to put vigorous democracy rather than communism in Asia's future.

Critics of the British Commonwealth say that it is an artificial structure. But if the critics are

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proved wrong, and it and the other unions prove successful, many of the long term problems of Asia are brought closer to solution, and the great long term question of a democratic world union is gently encouraged in its infancy.

The members of this fifth Commonwealth Conference are aware of the implications of what they can accomplish. The prime minister and foreign minister of Ceylon, P. S. Senanayake, said to the opening session that the decision to meet in Ceylon was practical proof that all Commonwealth members are now equal, irrespective of their size, race or religion. He went on to emphasize the theme that will be one of the Conference's central concerns: improvement of the living conditions and economic welfare of the people of the East. He said that communism would have no appeal to the masses of Asia if they were assured of such improvements. But Mr. Senanayake hardly went far enough. Obviously removing the conditions which drive people to refuge in the promises of communism is a part of the struggle for a free world, but there remains the fact that communism utilizes revolution from without as well as revolution from within, and its captures in Czechoslovakia and China could not have been prevented by simply improving living standards. It is here that the discussions must turn to the problems of China and a Japanese peace treaty, the next matters on the Conference agenda.

A Further Look into 1984

WE ARE publishing in this issue two articles, one from Britain and one from France, both of them having what seems to us a rather remarkable point of agreement. Yet each one comes to that point over different avenues of approach, from almost totally opposite directions.

Michael Fogarty tells us that if you look at the history of British socialism, you find that it has shaken old ideas out of its head a couple of times in the past, and each time it has taken about sixty years to do this thoroughly. Now there are already signs of a third ideological airing and this one should startle the doctrinaire socialist. British socialism, he writes, is finding out slowly that nationalization of industry is not the path to the Garden of Eden after all and there is evidence right now that the British Laborites are working out a technique that will break down huge social units and put more of man's business back into his own hands, back into the control of small, federated, local enterprises.

However long-range it is, this sounds very good to us because, for one thing, it tips the scales back in favor of the individual man again and gives him, instead of the state, a greater charge over his affairs. It reverses the trend to totalitarianism. Mr. Fogarty feels that socialism in Britain is going personalist.

Claire Bishop, who has been investigating the new "communities of work" on the Continent, finds somewhat the same personalist thinking there, a desire to make the community not just a place to earn a living on an assembly line, but a place in which a man subordinates the private profit motive to living a fuller life with others, sharing profits and losses in a small social enterprise, having some resemblance to our cooperatives. Here, too, the idea is to put man in such a position that he can exercise more personal responsibility over his affairs. British Labor would eventually break up the huge social unit from the top, the workers on the Continent are doing it from the bottom up.

As systems, totalitarianism, socialism and capitalism have all given birth to giants that have pinned man to the wall and now a personalist reaction against them is bound to come along. Almost everywhere this reaction has a socialist bent and one of the least satisfying things about it is that socialism tends simply to transfer control from capitalists to bureaucrats. The socialist state can easily catch the totalitarian mania and then it ends up making a social amalgam by "processing" its citizens, as though stuffing them through a meat grinder.

George Orwell, a British novelist who votes Labor himself, got so uneasy at this prospect that he decided to have a look at things as they would be in 1984, were the socialist instincts let run amuck. What he finally came to in his novel, *Nineteen Eighty Four,* was a vision of man on the rack, his mind and memory pulled apart, his body de-faced and virtually de-sexed, as limp and useless an article as Salvador Dali ever imagined. This is the logical and final assault for the big state, this dismembering of man himself, and we have seen, and still see today, enough of it to know that Orwell's fear is no dream.

It would seem to be true, too, that this assault must in the end issue in man's annihilation or else it must be frustrated, since it is inconceivable that man can endure the violence to his own person which is brought against him by the totalitarian state. As long as man exists, he must stage a comeback against this assault, or else lie down to it. In a very real and modern way, the struggle now has gotten down to a contest for the possession of man's person.

From Britain and France these are hopeful signs we read of, hopeful of man's survival intact, hopeful of his preserving a society where he can breathe and think the way he was meant to. What Michael Fogarty and Claire Bishop are saying should not, we feel, be passed over, if the year 1984 is to be a very happy one.

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Socialism into Personalism

There is a regular rhythm to the advance of the British Labor movement: now the third transformation is under way.

Michael P. Fogarty

NO fewer than five discussion groups, within the last six months, have asked me to help to write a new set of Fabian Essays. Program-writing is the royal and ancient sport of Left-intellectuals, and a pamphlet or two more or less would usually have been nothing to fuss over. But it is significant that this time it is Fabian Essays which are to be re-written. Those essays were important because they crystallized left-wing ideas at a crucial turning-point in the Labor movement's history. And pretty well everyone in the movement agrees today that, thanks to the Government's success in putting through the program on which Labor has campaigned for sixty years, an equally crucial turning-point has now been reached. There is a regular rhythm in the development of the labor movement, and it shows every sign of being repeated. It works itself out over about sixty years, or two generations.

Go back to the very earliest days, around 1815 or 1820, and you find first of all a time of confusion, an obvious turning point when working-class leaders were shaking out a set of obsolete ideas and evolving a new program. The prophets of the workers were Cobbett (of Rural Rides), or Robert Owen, preaching his cooperative villages, or the half-revolutionary Chartists, or the agitators of the Grand National Consolidated Trade Union of the early 'thirties. The working-class program, so far as there was a conscious program at all, was three acres and a cow and to hell with the factories and the Poor Law. It was negative, reactionary, and incoherent, more interested in the good old days than in the possibilities of the new industrial world.

The uselessness of this attitude was revealed by one disaster after another. Chartism failed. Revolutionary trade unionism failed. Land settlement and producers' cooperatives failed. The reform of the franchise in 1832, so far from benefiting the working-class, meant that such workers as had votes lost them, and middle-class governments chastised with scorpions (witness the New Poor Law of 1834) where the tenants of the old rotten boroughs had sloppily wielded whips. It began slowly to be seen what were and were not practical lines of working-class advance. By the middle 'forties a new program had emerged.

There could be no question now of overthrowing the new industrial order or escaping from it into a rural paradise. The problem was to make the best of it. The first step must be to let the working-class learn to stand on its own feet, and make it a power which other classes would both respect and fear. Self-help was therefore to be the order of the day, through trade unions like the new Amalgamated Society of Engineers, cooperatives on the new model of the Rochdale Pioneers, or the older friendly societies. Self-help could be effective only given certain political rights—the vote, the right to associate, and a reasonable legal status for trade unions and other working-class bodies. These rights had to be won, and working-class leaders remained vigorously political. But they had seen too many promising experiments wrecked by politicians to want politics inside the unions, and a common clause in the early rule books banned all political discussion at meetings. Apart from political rights, they asked from the State, not as yet constructive social legislation, but the repression of the worst abuses, through factory acts and public health legislation.

This was, of course, the pure milk of Manchester liberalism—respect for private enterprise, self-help, business before politics, political freedom, and the State holding the ring but having no positive social policy. And a new generation of leaders grew up, frankly identified with liberalism. The agitators vanished, the day of the top hat and gold watch-chain dawned. The new leaders looked like successful business men. As the rocketing growth of the cooperative movement showed, they *were* successful business men.

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IN about a generation, then, from 1815-20 to 1845-50, the labor movement had changed its program from distributism to liberalism. Over

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the next generation the new program was put into force. Progress at first was slow. Unions and cooperatives had to be built. The public had to be convinced that the new unionism was totally different from the old; good, solid bodies of skilled craftsmen, quite unlike the rabble who waved their torches in Chartist processions or rose in the Laborers' Revolt of 1830. Not till about 1865 was the stage set for a break-through.

But when it came it was spectacular. In one rush, within ten years, practically every item in the Lib-Lab program became an accomplished fact. The workers got the vote in 1867 and 1884. The first working-class MP's were elected in 1874—naturally, as Liberals—and the 1874 election was the first in British history to be swung by the organized workers on a specifically labor issue. The unions were given a new and secure status by Acts of 1871 and 1875, which are still the basis of British trade union law. Factory and public health legislation were consolidated and greatly extended. Over a wide field, resistance to collective bargaining crumbled. The organized workers had become a power in the land.

Then came a pause. Observers of the labor movement were struck in the early 'eighties, as in the 1820s and today, by its lack of direction. They were right. The problems of the last two generations had been solved, the inspiration they had given was exhausted, and the whole cycle was beginning over again with the generation needed to shake out old ideas, formulate new objectives, and decide what these implied in terms of organization and strategy.

After the first dead years of the 'eighties, many new groups leapt into the breach: Hyndman's Social Democratic Federation, William Morris' Socialist League, Keir Hardie's Independent Labor Party, and last but not least, working like beavers, the Fabians. At the Trade Union Congress and in branches up and down the country, the battle raged between liberals without a vision of the future and socialists without the prestige of successful leadership in the past.

Not till 1910 or 1914 were the prospects clear. The next objective, it was finally agreed, was to be the national minimum: a floor in the standard of life, underpinned by full employment, social security, housing and town planning programs, and the redistribution of high incomes through taxation. These measures went far beyond self-help. They were collectivist and socialist and by their nature had to come largely from the Government and municipalities. They also went far beyond what the middle-class Liberal leaders were ready to support. For both reasons, it was felt, labor must get back into politics. The old suspicion of politics vanished. The trade unions, and after 1917 even the cooperatives, became political organizations. And in 1900 the Labor Party was founded.

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AS before, a new generation of leaders grew up with this program. The Broadhursts and Mawdsleys of the old generation were not converted to socialism: they disappeared along with the Lib-Lab policy. In their place appeared new men, the great names of Labor's last generation: Keir Hardie, Arthur Henderson, Ramsay Macdonald, Snowden, Clynes.

There followed the generation needed to put this program into effect. It was heavy going at first, as it had been in 1850-65. All of us who worked in the labor movement in the inter-war years knew that feeling of frustration when you are at last certain that you have the truth in you, but are pushing hopelessly into the cotton-wool of indifference among the public and sloppy thinking in the Party. We had to learn how to do the job—what a full employment policy really implied, for example—and we had to win over the public. My own guess is that we had done it by 1939. Quite certainly we had done it by 1944, the year when the Conservatives formally accepted full employment as a function of Government policy, and Attlee told the Labor Party conference that the trouble about Labor was that it never knew when it had won. He was right. 1944, rather than the General Election of 1945, was the date of the break-through. By 1949 every main item of the socialist program hammered out between 1880 and 1944 had gone through.

So now, as in 1880, a cycle of advance has ended, and we find ourselves back in the same uncertainty as two or four generations ago. The socialist banner still waves defiantly over the old men: but the fascination of socialism, as once of liberalism, is extinct. The movement's life-cycle is visibly beginning again. Where will it take us next? Without getting involved in astrology, there are already quite a few pointers.

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FIRST, whether or not the British public can clear its mind about long-term objectives, there is going to be plenty to do merely to complete and consolidate the work begun since 1944. It will be surprising if development plans under the Education Act of 1944 are carried out in full much before 1980. The same applies to plans under the Town and Country Planning Act of 1947, and for the same reason: lack of capital to spend on the social services. But this is purely a matter of finishing the job in hand. What are

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to be the new objectives? It seems to me that there are two.

The main swing seems to be from socialism to personalism, by which I mean two things. First, the preoccupation with incomes and material living conditions characteristic of the socialist phase is beginning to drop out of left-wing discussions. The great bulk of what is being said and written in the Labor movement now is about human relations. The argument is confused, but seems to amount roughly to this: Two essential foundations for good human relations are mutual respect and reasonable material security. Before 1880 the working-class won power and self-respect: since 1880 it has achieved security. Now, therefore, the time has come to tackle the problem of human relations head on. And all the more so since, besides being important in themselves, good human relations are the key (via higher productivity and cooperation in the fight to keep down inflation and close the gap in the balance of payments) to further progress, even in material security.

So, in one field after another, the problem of human relations is coming to the forefront. The growing interest in problems of the family is illustrated by the recent report of the Royal Commission on the Population, or the rise of the marriage guidance movement. Recent trends in town planning stress the importance of the way people are grouped in the street or ward. So does the community association movement, and the whole range of writing and thinking which goes under the title of "active democracy." Problems of regionalism have been stressed in recent work on local government reform, and by the growing strength of Scottish and Welsh nationalism. In industry there is the recent intense interest in joint consultation and growing interest in the human aspects of management. And there is the work of the Cotton Board and other Development Councils on human relations at a higher level, the level of the industry as apart from the firm.

Under another aspect, the swing towards personalism looks almost like a return to individualism. We have cut off the two ends of the income scale by full employment, social security, and redistributive taxation, and created what is rapidly becoming a purely middle-class society. It will look still more middle-class in another generation, when, if productivity rises as can reasonably be expected, a typical working-class family will have a steady income around the £500 a year mark, with a drastic leveling out within each income group (on the lines proposed by the Royal Commission on the Population) between the childless and the families with children. And this seems likely to kill the still quite active socialist superstition that the equalization of incomes and the collective control of consumption must always go together. Working-class movements, at a certain level of average incomes, tend to think like that: and with some excuse, since at that stage of their development collective services are in fact the main need. But middle-class families, with a bigger margin of free income and more chance to appreciate the value of free choice, usually think otherwise. No one in the labor movement wants to go back on the policy of equalizing incomes, or repeal the collective services already installed. But, so far as future policy is concerned, there is already some reaction away from collective services and rationing and towards free consumer's choice.

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THE other main swing which seems to be coming in Labor policy is to what one can best call federalism. Always in the past we in Britain have thought of other countries, including the Dominions and Colonies, as absolutely distinct from our own. We may send an ambassador to France or a governor to Nigeria: but our relations with both are essentially external, quite unlike our relations with, say, Scotland or even Northern Ireland. Today this conception is breaking down. The idea that Britain should not merely have external relations with Europe but be integrated into it, as Ulster is integrated into the United Kingdom, is beginning to look more familiar. And we are beginning to fumble towards the idea that a similar, federal relationship might also be the best answer in the case of the Colonies. India or Pakistan can stand on their own: but, having watched the course of events in Burma, we are no longer so sure that independence or Dominion status is the perfect destiny for the smaller colonies.

But this colonial issue is still on or below the horizon for most people in the labor movement. We have hardly got round to thinking what the practical implications of a free, permanent association between ourselves and the smaller colonies might be. The richest ten per cent of our own population have average incomes five or six times as great as the average family in the working-class. This, in the labor movement's opinion, entitles the poorer ninety per cent to a slice off the surplus of the rich. But the average British worker has five or six times the income of the average inhabitant of the Colonies. So what? Ask us again in ten years' time.

Federalism means, if you like, large-scale planning. But it also, whether it is applied to the ancient countries of Europe or to the increasingly nationalistic colonies, means thinking in terms of decentralization. It puts centralizers on the defensive. A Minister may dismiss some Welsh MP's appeal for regional autonomy with an airy

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reference to the beauties of national planning. He will not find it quite so easy to do the same with M. Spaak or Alexander Bustamante. In this sense federalism, like personalism, is swinging Labor firmly away from the centralizing trend of its socialist years. And in fact the international problem of federalism and the national problem of human relations turn out to be one and the same. They dovetail at the point where the Scottish Convention suggests that the regionalization of Britain might well proceed side-by-side with the federalization of Europe.

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HOW about the time-table for all these changes? Can we improve on the pace of the last two great cycles of advance—a generation to define the next great group of problems, a generation to perfect the necessary techniques, win over the public, and apply solutions? So far we seem to be running to the old schedule, but certainly not ahead of it.

We are already well into the first phase of the new cycle, the decade in which ideas now obsolete are shaken out and the new program is formulated. The Labor movement is, permanently, nothing more than its name implies: a movement committed to the advancement of the ordinary working men and women. But it tends to fill out this rather vague and general program by growing a new temporary ideology to suit each successive set of current problems. The ideology remains, as an obstacle to further progress, even after the problems it was designed to meet are solved and it has yielded all the good it contains. In 1820 what had to go was the ideal of three acres and a cow. In 1880 it was the theoretical liberalism to which many of the older leaders had committed themselves. In 1950 it is the idea that more and more public ownership and central planning will lead us into the Garden of Eden.

But the socialist ideology is now being shaken off. The Labor election program for 1950 stresses decentralization, competition, free enterprise, and good human relations, where the 1945 program stressed central planning and public ownership. Follow through the successive nationalization acts, and you will find the same shift towards decentralization. At the beginning the National Coal Board was conceived as a unified industry run from an office in London. At the end, in gas and steel (as it will be if Labor gets back in 1950), the operating units are left in effect as so many separate corporations. In nonnationalized industry, our lives are brightened by periodic bonfires of controls. And what struck me most when I went along to one or two of the Fabian Essay discussion groups was the pretty well complete agreement even of Labor intellectuals that, reluctant as the more ideological of them were to admit it, we have almost everywhere reached the limits of the socialist measures on which most of us were brought up. We may still call the next stage socialist. Face has to be saved, and no one likes publicly throwing his principles overboard. But it is no longer the socialism of 1889, or even of 1940.

But can we speed up the later stages of the new cycle? Must it take till the year 2010, on the analogy of those which have gone before? There are very good reasons why the rhythm of social progress should be measured by the length of a human generation. A leader aged fifty is probably pretty set in his ideas, and yet has twenty years of active work in front of him: is it surprising—remembering also that new ideas are as crude and unconvincing as new babies—that it takes about a generation to change the Labor movement's mind? Is it surprising that, even when the movement itself agrees on where it is going next, it should take still another generation to convince everyone else: to allow a new generation of Conservatives to replace the Baldwins and Chamberlains? And are there not technical factors working the same way? You cannot solve practical problems without knowledge and experience, and these also accumulate a generation at a time. Nearly thirty years separated Beveridge's first classic book on unemployment from Keynes' *General Theory*. Thirty years separated the first tentative Town Planning Act from the report of the Barlow Commission, on which comprehensive town planning in this country could for the first time be based. Thirty years separated the first national insurance act from the Beveridge Report. The generation-by-generation pattern of advance has roots which run very deep.

Yet it is also true that we have means of speeding up progress which did not exist even in the inter-war years. The one most obvious to me, in a university, is the immensely increased volume of research going into the social sciences. Not all of it is of very high quality, and too little is in the fields of key importance for the future. The number of university sociologists competent for and interested in field studies can be counted on one hand. Also I find, with my own pupils, a curious lack of the feeling for history, for the process of becoming, without which you cannot make much sense of present social developments. There is, I think, quite a lot of that even among trained research workers. Yet the fact remains that we have infinitely more historical background and men and means for tracking current and prospective developments than existed in the days of Fabian Essays. My guess is that we shall cut the schedule this time, but not by very much: say to a generation and a half, instead of two. But your guess, or Stalin's, is as good as mine.

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Communities of Work

A revolution in human living: shifting the center from making things to developing human relationships.

Claire Huchet Bishop

I HAVE been on the road since October 7, throughout France, Switzerland, Italy, Belgium and Holland. I have visited over thirty "communities of work," if such English words can express adequately what is meant by the French *communautés de travail.* The French do not say *communautés de travailleurs,* that is, workers' communities, but *communities of work.* A community of workers could exist outside the work proper, such as a group of working people getting together for the purpose of relaxation. Whereas in a community of work, the work itself is common to all.

That the work itself is common to all in a community of work is true enough, but it is important to understand at the beginning that it is not work as an established, ineluctable fact, but as the economic expression of a group of people who wish to search for, and to experiment with a way of life better suited to present living conditions and to a fuller expression of the whole man.

The most striking of these experiments took place after 1940, at Boimondau. Undoubtedly Marcel Barbu's first community of work was the spark which set on fire a whole string of similar experiments. What Barbu did was to crystallize, outwardly and practically, the thoughts, desires and research of many in France. Of course, the communitarian current manifests itself in many other parts of the globe. Regarding France, Boimondau did not come out of a bookish theory, neither did it issue forth all from the mind of one man. It was the result of the collective groping in the dark of half a dozen young workers along with an older man tinged with genius. The originality did not lie in their thoughts, but in the manner in which their thoughts were made to work.

It would fill a book to tell why a community of work is not a cooperative, not a phalanstery, not a twentieth century Brook Farm or Oneida, not a Moscow secret agency, not a capitalist trick to circumvent the workers. Sufficient to put down here the question: Why do people get together and want to work in a community of work?

I have found out that, expressed somewhat differently, the answers all amount to: "We want to be men."

Of course? Not at all. Communitarians are very definite and articulate on what it means to be men.

1. In order to live a man's life one has to enjoy the whole fruit of one's labor.
2. One has to be able to educate oneself.
3. One has to pursue a common endeavor within a group proportioned to the stature of man.

Examining these requisities, one discovers that they amount to a shifting of the center of the problem of living—from making and acquiring *things* to discovering, fostering and developing *human relationships.* From a civilization of objects to a civilization of persons, better even—a civilization of movement between persons.

This is not to be built in a day. Though community of work does not mean common living quarters, there are still many occasions of friction and irritation. Many think they are ready to begin who are not ready. Some think it will be advantageous to them materially. Some that they will be their own boss. Then there are those who have failed elsewhere and who seek a refuge in these new communities. Those who have a chip on their shoulder permanently. Those who are looking for a place to exercise their sense of power. And last, but not least, those who think that one grand fraternal gesture will solve all their personal problems. I think all the workers I have met, and with whom I have the privilege of being on friendly terms, will agree with me that, at one time or another, and in different proportions according to their own temperament, they all exhibited, and still do occasionally, some of the traits mentioned above.

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INDEED, a community of work is not created, organized in one grand day. Neither money, nor technique will make a community. Because a community is not "made." That is a contradiction in terms. It grows, day by day. It is never a solution, a satisfying arrangement, a formula,

CLAIRE HUCHET BISHOP *is the author of* France Alive. *She has been in Europe the past few months examining the communities of work she writes about here; later this year Harper will publish a book of hers on the subject.*

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no matter how good, in which to fit life. A community of work is lived. It lives.

Roughly speaking, communities of work can be divided into two groups.

A. Those started by the workers themselves.
B. Those started by owners.

Group A can be divided again into:

A-1. The workers have their own financial start: ground, machinery, money.
A-2. The workers have nothing.

Group B can be divided again into:

B-1. Owners who permit communitarian experiments without getting their own enterprise involved.
B-2. Owners who "go communitarian" themselves.

In the everyday life of a community of work, its economic expression is but one side of the communitarian spirit. In this article, by necessity, we shall limit our study to the general economic aspect, since it seems that the first question which pops into the minds of all non-communitarians is, "Do they make a living?" As a whole, at the present time, I find group A-1 in a sound business condition. Some of them, such as Boimondau and Le Belier, are in excellent shape. Even some capitalists have told me that they think that only communities of work can weather a depression. This was spectacularly demonstrated last year during the general French economic crisis when Boimondau and Le Belier came out of the crisis on top of the French watch-casing market. As a result the main capitalist firms had to come around and beg Boimondau and Le Belier to join with them, since they were the only concerns which brought stability to the international watch-casing market in France.

And how did they do it? As it is done in a communitarian experiment, where everyone is always ready to put up with this and with that, even up to voting oneself a large cut in salary. Of course Boimondau and Le Belier being the oldest communities are in much better shape than the younger communities which had their start during bad times. But all in all communities of group A-1 get along not only as well as non-communitarian outfits, under the same conditions, but even better.

Group A-2 is, of course, in a precarious state. These people are the dare-devils of the movement. Hardly are they models to copy. But their experiments are very valuable in terms of laboratory. To start from nothing in our present world requires unusual physical stamina and a mental and moral equilibrium few possess. It is, of course, a matter of starting with nothing, not of remaining with nothing. Eventually a certain amount of capital has to be found—even in a non-capitalist enterprise—either in one's pocket, at the bank, or in friends' pockets.

And here is sometimes where group B-1 makes its entrance. People with money, friendly owners of industrial concerns who do not want to take the jump themselves, but who are willing to lend some money to a group of workers. Sometimes at a normal rate of interest. Sometimes at a nominal rate. But in all cases they relinquish all hold, financial and otherwise, on the community.

One might argue that repaying the loan is already a sword of Damocles over the community. But it is useless to pretend that a community of work can be an isolated phenomenon, divorced from the rest of the world. As long as the economic structure remains what it is at present, communities do have to deal with capitalistic ventures, though they themselves do not subscribe to the theory of interest nor to the reproduction of money by itself.

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THE fact that, occasionally, some help is found among capitalists raises some questions. Is it that, not risking much anyhow, they can afford to do it as a sort of by-play, being more or less convinced all the while that the workers won't be able to swing the community? Or is it because they hope by doing it to quiet down discontent and unrest? Maybe. But it seems to me, from what I have seen and listened to, that capitalists who help communities are people who are assailed by the evidence that the world cannot go on as is. And this in such an urgent manner that they are anxious to see what solutions anyone can work out. Who knows? Perhaps, out of these laboratory experiments something will turn out which can be used by all.

The people of group B-2 are the black sheep. They are in constant danger of being disavowed, both by the workers and other owners. They know it, understand it, accept it. Without bitterness and in humility they foresee their lives forfeited. Not only have they given up their own exclusive financial profit, but they also help to educate the workers along communitarian ways of living. And in this they do not think they are doing anything praiseworthy. Just sheer and evident justice. A fistful of farsighted and guileless people. It is so easy to deceive the workers, to give them the illusion that they are helping to own the business. Heads of firms know only too well how to practice that trick. But those who "go communitarian," who "take the jump," who "throw themselves in the bath," they are people of integrity.

The communities I have visited range from 100 families down to 6. It is understood that one large factory may comprise several communities of work. There are all sorts of economic enterprises: watch-casing, furniture making, grape growers, makers of boilers; building contractors,

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radio makers, makers of optic instruments, electric wiring, picture frames, bed springs, wool clothing, shoes.

Most communities are mixed—politically, religiously and, one might say, racially. Communitarians had the greatest difficulty just grasping my question about the presence of Jews or Negroes in the communities. They had no idea whether Negroes belonged anywhere to a community of work, let alone Jews, whom, in true French fashion, they were unable to distinguish anyhow. And, anyway, who cares? Well, I did not either, of course, but I had to do my American reporter's job.

A few communities have special allegiances—all Communists, all believers, all Catholics, all Protestants. But this is not really a pre-decided segregation. It turned out that the first ones to get together were all of the same mind along those lines, and thereby a climate was created which attracted other people with the same convictions.

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PERSONALLY I found the mixed communities most interesting. Witness the one of orchard growers where each member heads a different political list ranging from Right to extreme Left, fights like a dog at election time and lives in fraternal peace in the community—one purse for six families.

In a previous article I wrote for THE COMMONWEAL, I explained the way a community of work lives. Therefore here I tabulate only the main points:

1. The member of the community must seek an awareness of his own destiny, and the awareness he finds should tally with his daily life. This quest must be assisted by the community.

2. Each member is obliged to observe the minimal ethical code established and accepted by the whole body. He is free to adopt a more exacting ethical standard for himself but he has no right to impose it on others.

3. Each member is supposed to train and educate himself to the maximum of his capabilities. The community is obliged to supply the means whereby he may accomplish this.

4. *Every* human activity is work.

5. Men are equal as far as rights go, but not in abilities. Members are therefore rated on their total human value (professional, social, cultural).

6. The means of production belong to the community.

7. Agreement must be found between the private interests of each member and the collective interests of the community.

8. All decisions must be unanimous.

Each one of these points would require a long explanation. What I would like to emphasize here once more is that this outline shows a way of living geared to the problem of human relationships and not on the making of things, though objects have still to be made, and, as I mentioned above, they are made successfully in communities. People in communities of work are not dreamers. They are people with a scientific turn of mind. What is interesting is precisely that they do not apply it only to the making of things, but to the discovery of a human way of living. "We are searching. We do not think we have found the solution. We do not imagine that in one leap we have out-distanced the centuries-old movement for the liberation of the workers and of mankind. But our contribution is not a theory. It's something we are doing."

Factual, clear-headed contributions, burning with faith; were they to fail tomorrow they would remain an important step on the road toward the kingdom *"où la justice habitera."*

The Labor Movement

From the McNamara Brothers to the Reuther Brothers (1900-1950)

WHO tried to blow up the headquarters of the United Auto Workers? The more you think about it, the more likely it seems that the guilty man was a labor journalist in desperate search of a new angle.

He had to do this piece on trade unionism in the first half of the 20th century, see, and he had just been reading about the McNamara brothers in Louis Adamic's *Dynamite* and he thought to himself: "What more perfect way to contrast the first and last decades of these 50 years than to have somebody try—and fail—to blow up the UAW? I'll call it 'From the McNamara Brothers to the Reutner Brothers (1900-1950)'."

The use of dynamite is no longer popular in the labor movement as an organizing technique. But it was once. Not exactly popular perhaps; let us say well-known. It reached its peak in the first years of this century, and its most successful practitioners were the McNamara brothers. They were union officials in what was then a much more radical AFL than the one we know today. I believe that one or both were connected with the Bridge and Structural Iron Workers.

In those days there was more excuse for violent measures than there would be now. Labor was very weak. In 1903 the AFL had just 1,000,000 members. On the other hand, the employers were very strong, and very anti-labor. In the same year they had organized the National Association of Manufacturers for the express purpose, among other things, of destroying the trade union move-

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ment and, where that was not possible, of reducing its strength and influence to a minimum.

Although Teddy Roosevelt gave them some trouble, these men were accustomed to tell judges, legislators, local, state and federal officials, and even Presidents what they could and could not do. One of the things they could not do was pass any law that would protect the worker's right to join a union of his own choice.

Such a law would have interfered with the employer's sacred right to fire all workers who were suspected of union sympathies, his sacred right to force his employees to sign "yellow-dog contracts" committing them to stay away from the unions, and his sacred right to hire thugs and spies to break up any union—by either force, guile or both—before it could get fairly started. (See the records of the LaFollette Civil Liberties Committee.)

We should not forget how well-known, how popular, how respectable even, these things once were in the land of the free. All the best people did such things.

Back in the last century, in the coal fields, the Molly Maguires met this kind of tactic with a very simple counter-tactic: assassination! Later on the McNamara brothers and their like used dynamite, but mostly just on bridges and other non-union construction jobs. They tried to avoid homicide if possible.

In 1910 they extended the tactic in an ambitious attempt to discourage the publisher of the Los Angeles *Times*, a viciously anti-labor sheet which was largely responsible for the fact that Los Angeles was an open-shop town. Unlike the party that tried to destroy the UAW building the McNamaras were craftsmen, not bunglers. They were, in fact, far more successful than they had planned. Their blast not only destroyed the *Times* Building, but killed 21 people in addition.

The McNamaras were arrested and the labor movement began to build them up as a pair of martyrs who had been cruelly framed. Clarence Darrow went out to the Coast to defend them. But the act was ruined when the brothers confessed, labor received a very black eye and Los Angeles remained an open-shop town for the next 25 years. Dynamite was through as an organizer.

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THE ATTEMPT to blow up the UAW building in Detroit may have been the work of a crack-pot. It is not so likely that a crack-pot was responsible for the previous attempts to assassinate Walter and Victor Reuther. Those jobs were too damaging, and too well planned.

But even if all of them were the products of some deranged mind, it remains significant that the brothers in this case, the labor leaders in this case, were not the attackers, but the attacked. In a superficial sort of a way it proves something about the progress of labor over the past 50 years.

The Reuthers went through the extra-legal interlude of the sit-down strikes. It is not so long ago that Walter Reuther was beaten up by Ford thugs on the overpass at River Rouge. They knew the meaning of violence, both coming and going, long before they heard the roar of a shot-gun and saw the lights go out.

But still the climate is different now. It is far different now from what it was ten years ago, not to speak of 40 and 50 years ago. Today the major battles have been won. The bona fide unions have about 16,000,000 members,, and the UAW alone has close to the total union membership in 1903. The major segments of industry, including the auto industry, are well organized. Even under Taft-Hartley it is illegal for an employer to fire or refuse to hire because of union activity, (though some still do); it is illegal to use spies; it is illegal to use yellow-dog contracts. The courts are better too and so is government.

Now they accuse labor of trying to dominate the judicial and legislative process. Labor is a power.

With power comes responsibility. I said that last time, but it will bear saying again. Let us hope that labor will not make the same mistake that capital made when it had the power. Let us hope that labor will not squander the good will that it has won back since the days of the McNamara brothers. Let us hope that the Reuther brothers, two of the most able and influential men in the labor movement today, will not squander the good will that they have won from the American people by their idealism, their honesty and by the suffering that these attacks have cost them.

Let us hope that labor, in the second half of the 20th century, will be able to rise above ancient bitterness, above present self-interest, and see the vision of an America united in devotion to the common good. And not only see it, but serve it. Then, if the vision is not realized, no one will be writing a piece in January of the year 2000, a piece that complains about the way labor fumbled its opportunity in the middle years of this crucial century.

JOHN C. CORT.

The Stage

New York City Theatre Company

MAURICE EVANS is Supervisor in charge of the current eight-week repertory at the City Center and I cannot imagine a more fortunate circumstance—for the theatre at large, and especially for the discerning Center audience. I only wish Mr. Evans' press agents might have treated the weekly press as well as he has treated his public. It took a number of telephone calls, in addition to one fruitless trip to 55th Street, for me to secure tickets for the present offering of "She Stoops To Conquer" and I am sorry that the play's two-week's run will be over when this review appears. Nevertheless, as the business was honestly interesting, and as the future schedule promises to be equally so, I do think a detailed description will be in order.

My reasons for citing Mr. Evans as ideal director of the Center's dramatic possibilities are two-fold. The

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first will be that his promotion is in line with his performance. He has published, seriously and (I think) wholeheartedly, his belief in a possible People's Theatre in this country, and his analogy between the start of such a theatre here and the start of England's Old Vic is not drawn out of the air but out of stern and memorable experience in both countries. The thing can be done, Mr. Evans seems to think. Secondly, although he took no part in the Goldsmith classic, he did take time to deliver an uproarious "New Prologue" by W. W. Watt, an extremely neat piece of work. These verses were as timely as they were learned, and no single allusion in them escaped the Center public. To hear Mr. Evans delivering them at the top of his bent certainly proved that he had taken the right gauge of his audience and his audience proved to be loudly grateful.

As to the play and its performance, I suppose everyone will admit that the Goldsmith comedy is often charming and often very boring indeed. Here, however, it came off in a fashion I can only describe as sprightly, with a great amount of hullabaloo supplied by Ezra Stone's Tony Lumpkin. Especially in the second half did the business develop into pure fun on both sides of the foots. The cast was a notable one and, saving only a mix-drix of accents, performed nicely as an ensemble. My only quibble will be that Morton DaCosta's staging was somewhat uneven. Mr. DaCosta managed a perfectly delightful interlude involving a hank of wool, which secured our immediate sympathy for Kate and Marlow, but on the other hand, he let the celebrated "horse-pond" scene dwindle away. Nevertheless, the over-all effect was of gaiety and hurly-burly—just as it should have been—and the graceful and witty appearances of Celeste Holm and Brian Aherne in the leads made it an excellent evening. Also, I should like to make particular mention of William Brooks' original music.

Mr. Evans' schedule has it that the second offering is to be Emlyn Williams' "The Corn Is Green" with Eva Le Gallienne starred; the third, Shaw's "The Devil's Disciple" with Mr. Evans and Dennis King sharing the honors; and a fourth play shortly to be announced. I do honestly consider that all of this work will be serious, skilled, important and entertaining and I don't think anyone should miss it. (*at the City Center*).

An Announcement

READERS of this column will be glad to learn of Gilbert Miller's forthcoming presentation of T. S. Eliot's "Cocktail Party." Mr. Miller is importing the entire British production and the play is to open on January 21st. As this is one of the only occasions when the theological world, the philosophical world, the literary world and the theatre world (plus just *the world*), will be gathering under one roof each evening at 8:30, it occurs to me that out-of-town people will want to write in for their tickets at once. (*at the Henry Miller Theatre, 124 West 43rd Street, New York 18*).

KAPPO PHELAN.

The Screen

Not So Much Weaker

WHEN THE movies go to town on women's problems they really go to town. Recently they have been concentrating on suffering females, and while you may not agree with any of the answers turned up by this new batch of films, it is interesting to see what their problems are and how glittering stars solve situations that would throw most women in real life.

"East Side, West Side" starts out as if it were going to be a documentary on the contrasts that make up New York City, but it soon concentrates on socialite Barbara Stanwyck, who is very unhappy indeed about her philandering husband (James Mason). Again and again she has got James to promise to be good, but when his old flame (Ava Gardner) returns to town, poor weak Jimmie is a lost duck. About this time Barbara meets a real man (Van Heflin), a writer who doesn't have her social advantages but does have more sense than her husband. And what's more he proves quite handy when Ava is found murdered and James is accused. For a movie as involved and talky as this one, based on Marcia Davenport's novel, the solution is pretty thin. Barbara finally tells James that it was Ava who stood between them, and now that she's gone, there's nothing between them. So she walks out. Director Mervyn LeRoy has got some good performances from his cast, but his film is rather static and the problems involved aren't likely to move you much one way or the other.

Although I was touched by the situation in *"My Foolish Heart,"* I was moved more to anger than pity. It starts out with wife and mother Susan Hayward on the verge of alcoholism; and a long series of flashbacks shows us how she got that way. It seems than many years ago when she was still a "good girl," she fell in love with a young soldier (Dana Andrews). Although pregnant, she refused to marry him when he was to be sent overseas. But when Dana was killed in an accident, she quickly married a suitor (Ken Smith) to have a father for her coming child. Well, then, in the present, we see that this seven-year-old child (Gigi Perreau) is almost as neurotic as her mother, who drinks too much and fights with her husband continuously. Under Mark Robson's direction the exceedingly good cast and the script by Julius and Philip Epstein manage to jerk a tear or two as Susan's foolish heart leads her astray, but the tacked-on finale avoids the real issues so sentimentally that it will probably annoy you as it did me. Susan's husband agrees to give his unstable wife a divorce, but also agrees to give her the child who he still thinks is his own. Heaven help that child. Even J. D. Salinger, who wrote the original of this bitter story which first appeared in *The New Yorker*, didn't wind up with such an unhappy ending. Perhaps Samuel Goldwyn, who

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gave this picture its good production, has higher hopes for the future of this mother and daughter than were indicated on the screen. "My Foolish Heart" poses several problems for audiences too. Because of the deft handling of its slick production and the high quality of its acting (note especially Robert Keith and Lois Wheeler in the supporting cast) the film almost seems to be defending the divorce and earlier misconduct of its leading character. It is unfortunate that the closing scenes aren't more positive in their disapproval of Susan's foolish and wayward dalliance on the primrose path.

"The Reckless Moment" is also about a mother—a mother so distraught by her daughter's love affair with a bounder that she makes all kinds of sacrifices to save her daughter's name, when this nasty fellow is found dead on her beach one morning. It looks for a while as if the mother's efforts are in vain when another cad (James Mason) turns up for blackmail; but James is attracted to mama (Joan Bennett) and winds up by helping her and the daughter (Geraldine Brooks) out of their dilemma. The ethics in this piece are obviously pretty shaky; however Director Max Opuls keeps up the suspense to the very end. This is the kind of a movie that can give you a vicarious thrill as long as you don't consider its plot seriously.

"Thelma Jordan" will also give you a thrill in spite of its contrived story and dubious attitude toward life's realities. Thelma, played by a tough Barbara Stanwyck this time, has little difficulty in getting the assistant D. A. (Wendell Corey) on her side *before* she commits her crime. Wendell's having wife trouble, so he's an easy prey to Barbara's wiles. Then when she's accused of bumping off her aunt, Carey's heart is more with the defendant than in his work as prosecutor. Police investigator Paul Kelly, however, is at no time taken in by the seductive Stanwyck. Although the outcome of all this is not particularly nice, the legal boys won't have too many objections. Robert Siodmak doesn't build up too sympathetic a case for his leads, but he does work up a scary suspense before he gets around to his crime-does-not-pay conclusion.

The psychiatric boys aren't going to be too happy with *"Whirlpool,"* a strange thriller about a kleptomaniac (Gene Tierney) who turns to a fake healer (Jose Ferrer) for help instead of to her husband (Richard Conte) who is supposedly a successful psychiatrist. The plot, stemming from a novel by Guy Endore, is extremely complicated for a movie, and actually comes through more like a cheap melodrama than was intended. The goings-on when Ferrer hypnotizes Gene, and later when he hypnotizes himself, become rather silly. Producer-director Otto Preminger manages to scare you a couple of times, but as far as the main theme is concerned, we can't see that Gene is much better off at the finale than she was at the film's opening scene. At least her husband is aware of her problem now; no doubt he can help her more than Jose's glassy eyes.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

Of Note

Italy's Christian Democrats

The December, 1949, issue of Esprit *(27 rue Jacob, Paris VI[e]) carries a lengthy report by Marcello Binda on the "evolution of Christian Democracy" in Italy. The concluding section of Mr. Binda's Italian Letter to the French magazine is concerned with a current division of opinion among Italian Catholics.*

THE only argument among Catholics is that between Catholics "of the Left" and the others. This limitation of the field of battle ends up in a situation where every action of Catholics is colored by a reaction to their political position; so that on the political level, in the strict sense, controversy in the main is not yet centered on the problems of economic structures but more on other questions which have to be settled first: the structures of democracy itself, like political parties and government.

On the level of political theory, dispute is still centered on questions dealing with the separation of the temporal and the spiritual and the relative autonomy of these two activities.

Here a profound disagreement divides Catholics into two camps. On the one side, the men "of the Right" in Christian Democracy who support the separation of political action and Catholic Action (in the strict sense); on the other side, certain leaders of Catholic Action who support the unity of the two (political action and Catholic Action) as inseparable in the field of a Christian apostolate. . . . Actually, Italian Catholic Action under the inspiration of its leaders, participated *en masse* in the political field during the elections of April 18, 1948. A great number of priests who were Catholic Action chaplains or who were recruited by Catholic Action, worked with the movement. They took part in the political battle by preaching in the churches, by putting up posters and distributing leaflets to the families in their parish. This action had some remarkable results. The cellular organization of the Church gave Catholic Action a chance to reach voters in every tiny village and in the mountains of Southern Italy where the Christian Democrat party had no organization whatsoever. The campaign was not *officially* directed by Catholic Action but by a separate organization, the *Comitati Civici* (Civic Committees) founded by the president of the *Men of Catholic Action,* Luigi Gedda, a physician, who became in time President of the new organization.

The action of the Civic Committees concretized what had been a theoretical disagreement. The leaders of Christian Democracy, who had willingly enough accepted the practical help of Signor Gedda during the election campaign, were a little annoyed when, on the

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occasion of a spectacular 80th birthday demonstration of almost 100,000 *Young Men of Catholic Action,* Signor Carretto, a youth leader, clasped hands with Signor Gedda and then made a political speech in St. Peter's Square itself, before midnight Mass. He made some forthright demands of the Minister of the Treasury and the President of the Council. "We elected you," he said, "and we have the right to control you, or to withdraw our support."

Immediately the left wing of Christian Democracy hastened to lift the veil from the Party's platform, at the direction of the Party itself and without too much opposition from the right wing. Signor de Gasperi himself took over the mission to the Holy Father.

The question still smoulders in the ashes . . . and this was the situation when on September 29th, during the General Assembly of Catholic Action, the Holy Father sent word about the new nominations for offices in Catholic Action (which are renewed every three years). Signor Luigi Gedda was named Vice-President of Italian Catholic Action.

There isn't space to probe the meaning of this appointment. For instance—is Catholic Action going to be vigorously pushed into the anti-Communist struggle? Then, as a consequence, will the purely political struggle, now on its last legs, give way to an extreme emphasis on the political in Italian Christianity?

The first Sunday of October, the walls of buildings in Rome were covered with bright anti-Communist signs. At the lower right-hand corner of each there was some writing: "Here through the work of the Civic Committees."

Church and Capitalism

Some months ago Giuseppe Della Torre, Editor-in-Chief of Vatican City's Osservatore Romano, *wrote a widely quoted article on the Church and Capitalism. He ended it by saying: "The assumption that a marriage has been arranged between Catholicism and Capitalism is in no way justified since such a marriage would be invalid according to any treatise* de matrimonio *on the grounds of* disparitas cultus."

In a recent issue of The Tablet (128 *Sloane Street, S.W.* 1, *London*) *Douglas Woodruff disagrees.*

I MYSELF saw, in the Austrian election campaign, the confusion caused by an article on capitalism which appeared in the *Osservatore* last May, under the respected name of the Editor, because in that article (it was reprinted in *Blackfriars* in October) the definitions of capitalism do not remain constant, and language which is first used about its "illicit" functions or "the lust for wealth" is at times extended to a universal condemnation. The confusion can be seen where the Editor quotes the present Holy Father's carefully precise language: "Wheresoever capitalism is based on erroneous conceptions, taking upon itself unlimited power over property without any considerations for the common weal, the Church has condemned it as contrary to natural law." But this is paraphrased by the Editor as: "Capitalism is a sin against nature, just as birth-control is a sin against nature"; and he even adds the gloss that "Communism itself, as an economic system apart from its philosophy, is not in contradiction with the nature of Christianity as is capitalism, except when Communism professes and applies atheistic principles. Capitalism is intrinsically atheistic."

Yet Communism, like Socialism, has been roundly and explicitly condemned, over and over again, as in the writings of Leo XIII, not solely for its atheism but for its economic teaching, for its denial of man's natural right to productive property. And it is of the utmost practical importance to understand that the capitalism which can be called atheistic is an "ism," and denotes attitudes and activities which do not exist in isolation or dominate any society, as Marxist-Leninist Communism dominates Soviet society. In capitalist societies there is always so much else, as there is in the individual men who live by their capitalist activities, so that there is no capitalist society in the same exclusive sense that there is a Communist society.

The Catholic Church is being put in a false position and a false light while at one and the same time these things are being written in Rome, and elsewhere Cardinal Spellman, and the American Bishops generally, praise so very warmly that American way of life which is in its economic activities the supreme example of capitalist society, and one for whose wealth and help all Italy, including the Church, is very grateful. There are French and Italian Catholics who have, in my opinion, narrowed their horizon far too much, geographically and historically, so that they are only thinking how to counter Communist propaganda among the French or Italian proletariat. For their local battle they use language which contrasts very markedly with the classical statements on productive property issued by Leo XIII, in a whole series of letters whose tenor is missed by those who only know *Rerum Novarum,* and who know and quote some parts of that much more than other parts. This strong language is intended to reassure and help the workers whose welfare is sought, but the welfare of the workers has been very obviously advanced more effectively in the United States than anywhere else.

Signor Saragat summed up the matter some years ago when he said that the Italian worker who listens to Socialist remedies in Italy does so from despair of any others: but the moment he reaches America—as so few can today—he adopts an entirely different philosophy and is a collectivist no longer. There is also the danger that, after crossing the Atlantic, he will find the spokesmen of his Church talking an altogether different language about Capitalist society.

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Notes on Moravia

Serge Hughes

IN SPITE of the excellent position of *The Woman of Rome* on the best seller list, the novel is truly substantial. Understandably, the perpetual adolescents are reading it and will read it for its subject matter since, as one critic has already pointed out, it is a book for which the American public has long waited, a book about whoring from beginning to end. Moravia, however, if not the finest, certainly one of the best novelists writing in Italy today, is not an author to be lightly passed over, either as a brutal realist or as a writer whose province is limited to the bedroom.

His first novel, *Gli Indifferenti,* (The Indifferent Ones) was written when the author was barely 22 years old. It is a laborious and unflinching analysis of the lethargy and despair of the generation of Post-World War I, narrating in detail the slow putrefaction of a bankrupt aristocratic Roman family. Two young people, brother and sister, overcome by the squalor and tinsel of their life, resolve to conquer their inertia, she by deciding to marry her mother's lover, he by placing himself under the protection of the same man. The book was acclaimed by European critics and a French translation soon appeared. The attraction proper to that first novel is the attraction proper to a horror story, and the monstrous emptiness which it revealed provoked not understanding but hatred. The Fascists especially, intent upon moral regeneration for what the philosopher Gentile called the moral state, could not tolerate it. It was passed off as an exclusively autobiographical essay and new editions of the book were banned. Literature, like the virile statues which surround the Mussolini Forum, was to be strong, firm, muscular—devoid of any inclination to morbid introspection. Above all, the Fascists were not to be contaminated by decadent literature.

As an indication of the consistency of ideology, somewhat later the dictator of Germany was to send Mussolini a magnificent edition of the collected works of Friedrich Nietzsche. But consistency, it has been said, is the hobgoblin of little minds.

For six years, no new works of Moravia appeared until in 1935 there was published a collection of short stories, *La Bella Vita.* Six years' work was apparent, and critics began to comment on the Dostoyevskian flavor of Moravia's art and to search for his spiritual brethren among German authors and the decadent novelists of Italy. How were they to explain the unheroic pessimism, the unabated grayness of Moravia's world? And the subject matter, an ugly subject matter frequently, portrayed, too, in such an ugly fashion, but with a note of torment which was significantly absent in all the works of the "Realistic" writers—how could one judge that? A few readers, however, had perceived that all the shadows and moans seen and heard and fled from by the good Italian writers had been gathered by Moravia and pinpointed into the Italian conscience.

Together with that volume of short stories there appeared in the same year *Le Ambizioni Sbagliate* (*The Mistaken Ambitions*). (In what contrast is the overt moral tone of Moravia's titles with the concealed, bitter morality of his works!) For the first time there appeared a hero, a man striving to be moral: his attempt fails. Far superior to *Gli Indifferenti,* this work, with characters taken from all the strata of society, reaches a savageness and a violence unachieved in the first novel. It is this book, rather than the novel of his early youth, that has acquired for some the value of an examination of conscience. At this point, too, Moravia's art had revealed itself as the art of the noun; the adjective, which accounts for so much of Italian rhetoric, had become for him insignificant. The art, the words themselves, had become clipped, blunt; as T. S. Eliot would say, butt-ends. Although meeting growing opposition from Fascist circles at this time, the author was not hindered in any way. Where bribes were not effective a guarded tolerance was observed. That explains why a later work, *La Mascherata,* (the story of a love affair of a general in a South American republic but actually a thinly veiled account of the private life of Mussolini) was not banned.

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THE CLIMAX of Moravia's art seems to have been reached with *Agostino,* an episode in the life of an adolescent and his discovery of sex. The theme certainly is common. At no other time in the history of Europe have the problems of adolescence been so closely scrutinized as in our times: Proust, Gide, Mauriac, Wedekind, are only the first names that come to mind. With this theme, Moravia has told a story of a sensitive adolescent whose life at one terrifying point is a wavering between homosexuality and incest, and who emerges from the crisis no longer a child, not yet a man, and whose suffering in the past is only a small portent of his suffering in the future.

For those interested in intellectual ancestry, the features of Freud are clearly discernible; a bit more remote, those of Leopardi, whose influence has loomed enormously in contemporary Italian literature; and still somewhat further back, the suave and acid smile of La Rochefoucauld. Yet all this academic explanation is more shadow than substance, for the intangible but quite

SERGE HUGHES *is on the faculty of St. John's University in Brooklyn. He has made a special study of modern Italian writers, of whom Alberto Moravia, the author of the recently published* The Woman of Rome, *is one of the most important.*

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real force that motivates Moravia's art is his Judaism. Not that he is a believer, but like his other great contemporary, Kafka, for whom he has shown great sympathy, he has felt as few others the anguish and frustration of a corrupt human nature and the brutality in man which constantly reasserts itself.

In *The Woman of Rome* this mood has become so intense that it tends to push the characters, even the heroine, into the background. There is no novelty to the story of a prostitute and her adventures; Moll Flanders is not of recent date. But in this story of the girl and of the men she meets, loves and is loved by, there is woven a subtle sense of nullity which had appeared so melodramatically some twenty years ago in *Gli Indifferenti.* No longer is the protagonist the familiar decadent family, nor is the prostitute a noble Dostoyevskian creation. The prostitute, fearing to admit to herself her own complexity, is a desperate creature, yearning for a spiritual simplicity and an integrity which will never be hers. Her lovers, Astarita of the secret police, Sonsogno, a brutal criminal, and Giacomino, a weak, vain student, are all tormented beings, incapable of achieving peace for themselves or giving it to others. How pitiful is the heroine's "healthy paganism"! And with what repulsion and disgust is the sex act represented in these pages! It is presented as the most sordid aspect of life, offering not temptation (temptation in Moravia?!) but nausea, and not the nausea of the flesh in corruption but that deeper and more lasting one that overcomes the exhausted confronted with hopelessness.

★

SOME five years ago, Moravia expressed in an article on Communism and Christianity his belief that Communism, purified of its worst elements and elevated by Christian virtues, would offer the hope indispensable for the survival of man and civilization. Such a view is entirely unacceptable to us. Now more than ever the liberal should be convinced that there is in Christianity an absolute center which cannot possibly be lowered to become a part of another philosophy or political mystique. Notwithstanding the diversity of our beliefs, Moravia's art is of great value, if only as a document in the history of what may be the most profound apathy and self-hatred that Western Europe has experienced and, dare we admit it, may still experience. *The Woman of Rome* gives evidence of that mood of hopelessness which, forced underground during Fascism, has now knifed its way to the surface. In this world of prostitutes, of adventures, of nouveaux-riches, brutal men of action, among the violence and the tinsel, there the reader will find hidden illness and more profound pain.

It is tempting to call Moravia a moralist. It is more exact to describe him as an artist deeply preoccupied with moral problems. As such his meaning and his despairing answers are of grave concern to the Christian.

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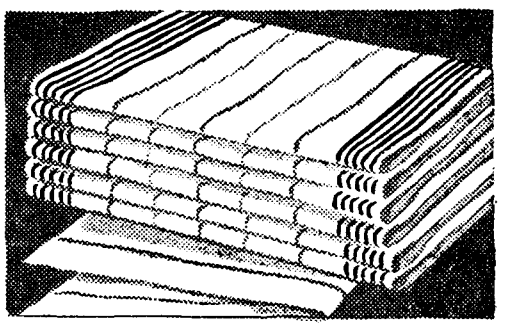

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Books

Dante Gabriel Rossetti: A Victorian Romantic. Oswald Doughty. Yale. $10.00.

AWE predominated over every other emotion as I read the six hundred and eightieth—and final—page of Professor Doughty's biography of Rossetti. One's complaint against most scholarly "lives" is that they lose sight of their subject's personality in their anxiety to present only verifiable facts—supported by references to volume and page—whereas the biographer with purely literary or commercial ambitions seeks to present a living man, even if he has to abandon fact for fiction. Professor Doughty, however, shows us what can be accomplished when the exacting standards of modern scholarship are applied in all their rigor. By reading literally everything that has any bearing upon Rossetti—his bibliography lists 122 published and 35 unpublished items—he has come to know almost as much about his subject as Boswell did about Johnson. Chary, like all scholars, of giving his own opinion, he can give you instead half-a-dozen complementary—or contradictory—views of debatable aspects of Rossetti's character, by as many intimates of the painter-poet. When all else fails, he can quote Rosetti's own extremely autobiographical poems as symptomatic of states of mind that no other documentary evidence can or could reveal.

Ultimately, perhaps, the method defeats itself. The more the reader learns about Rosetti, the more baffled he becomes. I have often thought that the least complex of human beings would become unclassifiable if one knew everything there was to be known about him. How difficult, then, it becomes to label someone as complex as Rossetti when all the facts are in. Certainly, he was a neurotic; to say that is to say nothing, for he was so fertile in neurotic symptoms as to be capable of inclusion in almost any neurotic category—and at times in psychotic ones too. He manifests all the characteristics of a manic-depressive simultaneously with those of a paranoiac. He has the death-wish, the Oedipus complex, a sense of guilt, an inferiority complex and goodness knows what else besides. He combines introvert and extrovert traits. In fact, one had just better leave the psychology books on the shelf.

Perhaps, after all, most of us have known someone very like Rossetti—a young idealist, chock-full of personal charm and talent, whose amatory and commercial successes eventually turn him into a "wise guy," while leaving his idealistic hunger intact and necessarily unsated. Such a character, one feels, would have been happier without the charm and talent that have brought him women and money on easy terms. The melodramatic details of Rossetti's life, and that touch of genius that makes his paintings and drawings (however faulty in execution) so unmistakably his, are what distinguish him

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from so many other "sad young men" of his day and ours.

Let me just summarize the melodrama for a moment. The son of an Italian revolutionary poet, Rossetti shows poetical and artistic talent while still in his teens. At twenty he magnetizes a group of young artists who have up to that time shown more ability than he; they become the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood. At twenty-two he falls in love with the haunting face and aloof manner of Elizabeth Siddal, whom he paints endlessly. For ten years they continue in a Dante and Beatrice relationship, but when he does finally marry her, his love for her is virtually over and he believes that she may be mortally ill. Their child is still-born; her reason is affected; after two years of marriage she commits suicide; he feels he is to blame, and buries with her the only complete copy of his poems. Soon afterward he becomes the protector of a semi-illiterate model, formerly a prostitute, named Fanny Cornforth, with whom he has had relations off and on since before his marriage. Their relationship lasts for the rest of his life, though at forty he becomes the lover of a woman who seems at first to satisfy both flesh and spirit—none other than the wife of his fellow Pre-Raphaelite, William Morris.

In order to bring out his first regularly-published volume of poems, he has Lizzie Siddal's body exhumed. Also included in this book are many poems to Mrs. Morris, which he tries to pass off as written to his late wife. Buchanan's pseudonymous attack on him, "The Fleshly School of Poetry," backfires against its author, but finds an echo in Rossetti's sense of guilt; persecution mania and over-indulgence in chloral and alcohol ensue; a life which has become an agony ends in his fifty-fourth year.

One cannot help but pity the unhappy scholar who must try to present such a life dispassionately—grimly going through the sonnet sequence, "The House of Life," almost line by line, to prove that it was written to Janey Morris, not to Lizzie Siddal. Professor Doughty proves his point—but at too great length, in my opinion. He also proves, without trying, that Rossetti is an inferior poet, the victim of Victorian conventions, both moral and aesthetic.

After this definitive biography, it should now be possible to attempt a definitive critical study of Rossetti as painter and poet. (The illustrations, incidentally, provide excellent documentation of Rossetti as both man and artist.) Knowing nothing of the technical side of painting, I admire him as a painter. Knowing something of the technical side of poetry, I deplore him as a poet. Perhaps his fate is to be a painters' poet and a poets' painter.

VIVIAN MERCIER.

The Cardinal's Story. Stephen K. Swift. Macmillan. $3.75.

THE author, a smart journalist, born in Hungary, tells the life story of Joseph Cardinal Mindszenty in a very lively and pointed way and against the background of the Communist terror in Eastern Europe. He

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Doctor Rowan's translation, though a faithful rendition of the original, is in clear, readable English. The value of this version is greatly enhanced by copious footnotes of two kinds: exact citations of authors (e.g., Aristotle, St. Augustine) to whom St. Thomas refers; explanations of terms and views that otherwise might be obscure to modern readers. The translator has provided a comprehensive index.

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has collected biographical material from forty-two eye-witnesses and has incorporated many pages from the stenographic minutes of the Mindszenty trial.

Treatments like this of the Cardinal's life will always be fascinating as long as freedom is suppressed by an anti-religious dictatorship. The most sensational event in the Cardinal's martyrdom appears to be the cooperation of Professor Gerson and a former Nazi, named Olti, in destroying the Cardinal's personality by the injection of drugs. According to Swift, Actedron and Mescaline were used. They are manufactured in Russia as a synthetic compound and have allegedly been used rather frequently by the secret police of the Soviet Union and her vassal states. The symptoms of Mescaline intoxication were described in detail by G. K. Stockings in the *Journal of Mental Science* in 1940. It seems that this intoxication brings forth a fragmentation of the entire personality, similar to that found in schizophrenic patients. Apparently this satanic crime (not yet branded as a crime against humanity by the United Nations) was staged, step by step, during the forty days between the Cardinal's arrest and his appearance at the trial.

To the moving story of the Cardinal's life are added excerpts from his notes, letters, addresses and sermons, as well as an article by an expert on the political and legal aspects of the trial. Another appendix gives the main data of Hungarian history through the fifteen hundred years from Attila's death to our day. MAX FISCHER.

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California Heritage. Oscar Lewis. Crowell. $5.00.

IN *California Heritage,* a brisk, concise history in words and pictures of the Golden State, Oscar Lewis has done rather a remarkable job. He makes no pretense of uncovering new scholarly data or presenting new historical finds. His has been, rather, an editorial work, a work of weighing and selecting. So far as his text is concerned, this has been very well done, especially for so brief an account.

His selection of illustrations, and they comprise roughly half of the 183 pages, is masterly. Merely as a picture book, a Californian finds the book worth the purchase price, but credit should be given, too, for the excellent balance in the history itself, which gives due weight especially to that turbulent era a century ago when gold was discovered and the calm of the Spanish and Mexican influences was shattered forever.

Mr. Lewis very rightfully shows how the present personality of the state draws more from the rough and tumble of those times than from the easeful days of the Dons. He does not slight the Latin era, but he does not, as so many writers do, over-emphasize its importance. Typographically, *California Heritage* is a pleasure. While the historian would be more interested in the pictures than the text, for the layman who wants a quick, just story of California and how it came to be what it is, it seems to me that *California Heritage* is what he is looking for. JAMES L. DUFF.

• REVIEWERS •

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